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A COMPANION

TO THE

Prayer Book

BY

THE BISHOP OF VERMONT

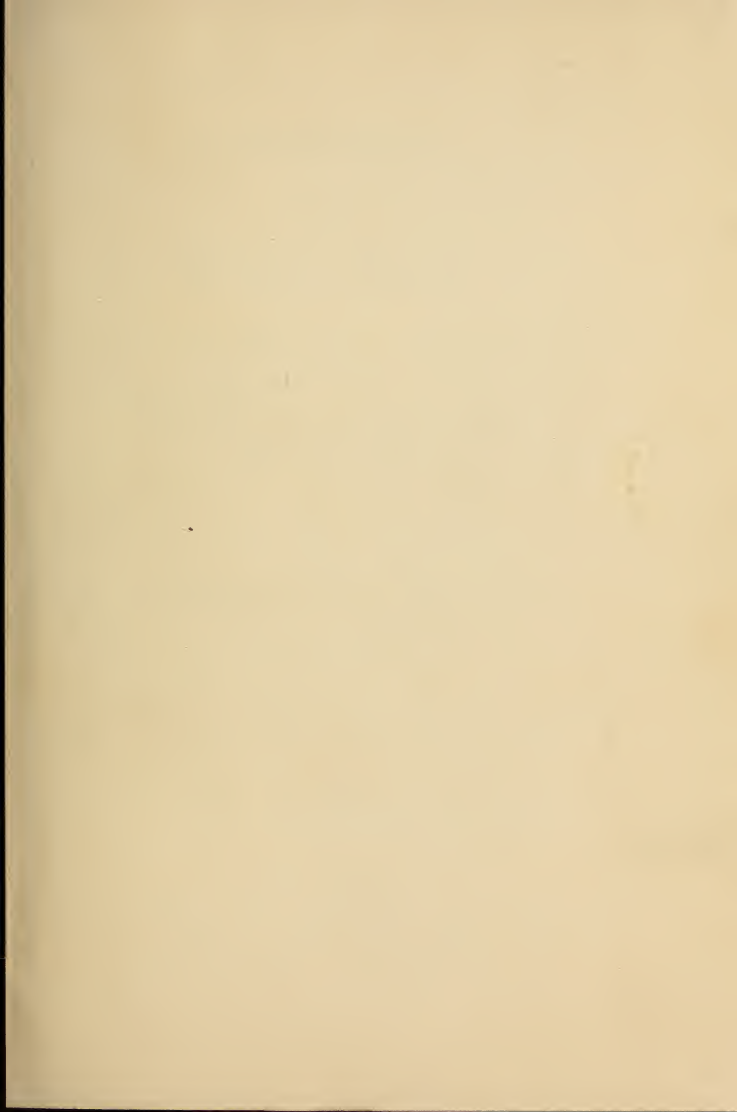


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# A COMPANION

TO THE

## Prayer Book

A LITURGICAL AND SPIRITUAL EXPOSITION OF  
THE SERVICES FOR THE HOLY COMMUNION  
MORNING AND EVENING PRAYER  
AND THE LITANY

BY

THE RIGHT REV. A. C. A. HALL, D.D.

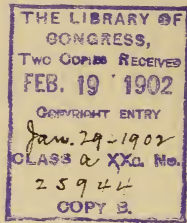
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## Preface.

IT will be well to make plain the purpose of this little book. There are many excellent works on the Prayer Book, dealing with its origin and history, its structure and contents. Among these, of later date than Wheatley's "Rational Illustration," may be mentioned Blunt's "Annotated Book of Common Prayer," Bishop Barry's "The Teacher's Prayer Book" (both of which have an American edition), the "Prayer Book Interleaved," Mr. Pullan's "History of the Book of Common Prayer" in the Oxford Library of Practical Theology, and—latest and fullest of all—the new edition of Procter on the Prayer Book, largely re-written, by the Rev. W. H. Frere. But these works are for the most part intended for students, and are theological or historical rather than spiritual.\*

On the other hand, great advance has been made in liturgical studies since Bishop Coxe wrote his "Thoughts on the Services," which

\* Besides the books above referred to, a great deal of most interesting information and criticism will be found in The Workmanship of the Prayer Book in its Literary and Liturgical Aspects, by the Bishop of Edinburgh (Dr. Dowden).

have proved of the greatest help to a large number of people.

The author's object has been, while availing himself of the historical research of scholars, to give a simple exposition of the Prayer Book services as they are; that our people, seeing the meaning of the different parts and of their relation one to another, may be able to join in the worship at once with more intelligence and with more devotion.

The book being intended primarily for lay people, and to aid their devotion, rubrical questions are not dealt with. These directions of the Prayer Book have been considered more particularly for the clergy in the author's "Notes on the use of the Prayer Book."

The author has not scrupled to refer to other publications of his own for the fuller and separate treatment of subjects, like the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Collects, which here can only claim a place among others.

To two friends, who kindly listened to the reading of the manuscript and gave several helpful suggestions, the author gladly acknowledges his special obligations—the Bishop of New Hampshire (Dr. Niles), and Professor Body, of the General Theological Seminary.

This little book deals only with the services in constant use. It is hoped that a second part may be published giving a similar exposition of the occasional offices.

Burlington, Vermont, January 1, 1902.



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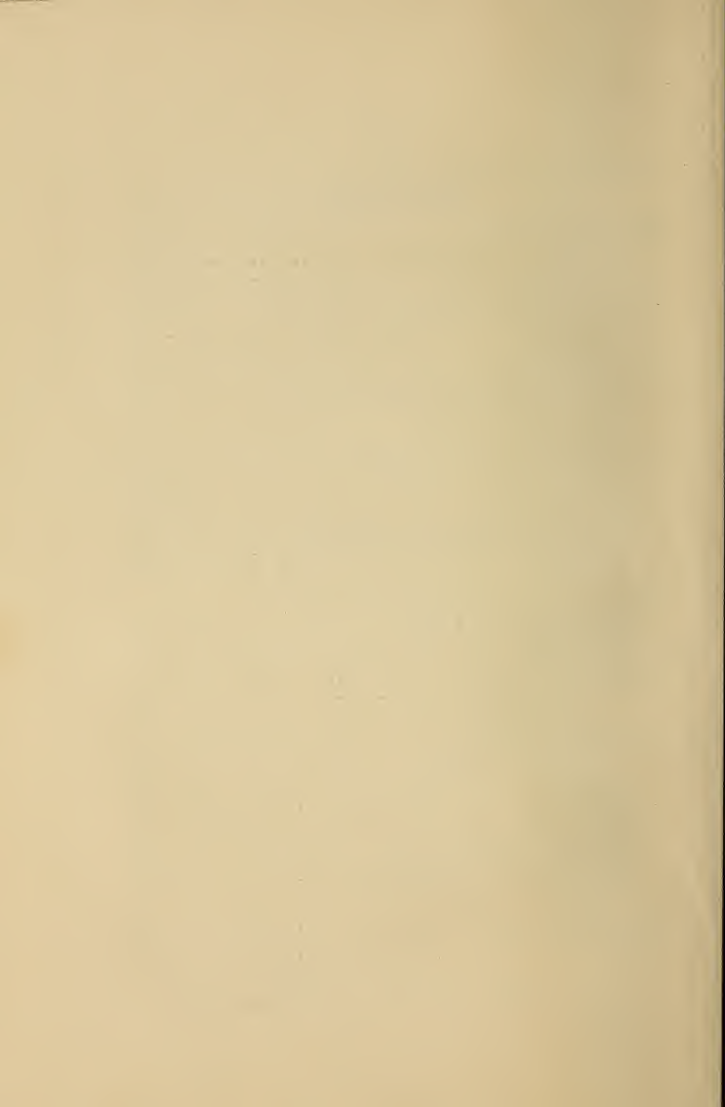
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## Holy Communion.

### THE INTRODUCTORY PRAYERS.

THE Lord's Prayer and introductory collect were formerly a part of the priest's private preparation. This accounts for the custom (general in England, and commonly followed in America) of the Lord's Prayer in this place being repeated aloud by the priest alone.

It will be observed that the Lord's Prayer is said here, at the beginning of the service, without the familiar doxology, "For thine is the kingdom," etc., which is added in the Thanksgiving after Communion. The words almost certainly did not belong to the prayer as given by our Lord. They are not found at all in St. Luke's account of its delivery (xi. 4), and are of very doubtful authority in St. Matthew's (vi. 13). They were in very early times added to the prayer, being a doxology in common use in the Christian Church at the end of prayers, which came to be attached to the Lord's Prayer in some of the manuscripts. (See Gore's "Practical Exposition of the Sermon on the Mount," pp. 129, 130.)

The introductory collect, often but not happily styled the collect for purity, stands for an important spiritual truth which is too commonly lost sight of, that we need and should seek the aid of the Holy Ghost to enable us to draw near to God acceptably and worthily. "The Spirit helpeth our infirmity: for we know not how to pray as we ought; but the Spirit himself maketh intercession for us" (Rom. viii. 26); not as we think of our Lord pleading *for* us at the throne of God, but *within* us suggesting holy desires, steadying our attention, enabling us to lift up our hearts to God. Thus "praying in the Holy Spirit" (St. Jude 20), we can join with our Lord Jesus Christ as living members of His body, taught and led by His Spirit, in this solemn approach to God. According to the old English use the *Veni Creator Spiritus*, "Come, Holy Ghost, Creator Blest" (Hymnal 380 or 289), was said by the priest while vesting, with this intention of invoking the help of the Holy Spirit in celebrating the sacred mysteries.

We should note what may be called the *positive* purity of heart for which the collect asks—not a mere absence of evil thoughts or desires, but "cleanse . . . by the inspiration," or inbreathing "of thy Holy Spirit" of truth and purity and love. So we hope "perfectly to love" God, and worthily to magnify His holy name in this great act of worship.

## THE COMMANDMENTS.

THE rehearsal of the Law, either in the form of the Ten Commandments delivered through Moses or in our Lord's summary of them, is a peculiarity of the English liturgy and those derived therefrom. Our American service inherits the summary from the liturgy of the Scottish Church. In some ancient eucharistic services there was a variable reading from the Old Testament, the Law or the Prophets, corresponding to the Epistle and Gospel, with which our rehearsal of the Decalogue has sometimes been compared. Of old there was, too, very generally at the beginning of the service a repetition of the *Kyrie eleison* (Lord have mercy upon us, Christ have mercy upon us, Lord have mercy upon us), each petition being repeated three times. This very likely suggested the response to each of the Ten Commandments, in which the people "ask God mercy for their transgression thereof for the time past, and grace to keep the same for the time to come." The petitions added to the older "Lord have mercy upon us" ("incline our hearts to keep this law," and "write all these thy laws in our hearts, we beseech thee") are founded on the prophetic promises of grace in the new dispensation. Jer. xxxi. 31-34. Compare Heb. viii. 7, etc.; x. 16, 17.

In approaching the holy mysteries the Com-

mandments stand as a sort of moral test or guard, as the Creed witnesses to the necessity of a right faith. The explanation of the Commandments in the Catechism under the Duty toward God and the Duty toward our Neighbour might well be frequently used as a basis for self-examination in preparation for Holy Communion. A fuller and very helpful explanation of the Commandments for the purpose of self-examination is given as an appendix to Gore's "Exposition of the Sermon on the Mount."

### THE COLLECTS.

THE collects, or short prayers for each Sunday and Holy-day, are a glory of the Western Church, unknown in the Eastern liturgies. Ours are for the most part translated from the Latin, being found in Sacramentaries, or collections of prayers for use at the Sacrament of our Lord's Body and Blood, attributed to Popes Leo (A.D. 430), Gelasius (494), and Gregory (590). These Sacramentaries themselves belong to a later date than the great bishops whose names they bear, probably respectively to the middle of the sixth, the beginning of the eighth, and the end of the eighth centuries; but the books were rather compilations than compositions, and many of the prayers contained in them are of older origin

and use.\* Most of our weekly collects are now appointed for the same Sundays on which they have been used for successive centuries. Thus we are linked with God's servants throughout the ages, as well as throughout the world, in repeating the words in which they have been accustomed through successive generations to express their highest aspirations and deepest supplications. This link of spiritual association, along with the terseness whereby they "say so much in saying so little,"† may be reckoned among the chief excellences of the collects.

The collects are so called because they were originally the collecting and gathering together of the private silent prayers of the congregation. The officiant propounded certain subjects for prayer in the form of a bidding; then, after an interval for silent prayer, the officiant said the collect to sum up in one short form the private prayers of the people, and they responded Amen.‡

It will be observed that the collects are nearly all framed on the same model of three-fold structure: (1) The Invocation, in which some attribute of Almighty God is generally men-

\* Frere's Procter, p. 469, and Wordsworth's Ministry of Grace, pp. 73-75.

† Ancient Collects, by William Bright. Appendix, On the Collects in the Prayer Book, p. 199.

‡ Frere, p. 523.

tioned as a ground for the presentation of our petition; (2) the Petition, great thoughts and desires being gathered up in a few simple words; (3) the Pleading of our Lord's merits, often accompanied by a doxology.

The collects for the Saints' days are mostly of English composition, the older Latin collects frequently containing a petition for the aid of the prayers of the saint commemorated, and generally being meagre in comparison with those for the Sundays or the festivals of our Lord.

For those who would learn more of the spiritual treasures enshrined in the collects, and try to make the law of prayer the law at once of faith and of life, reference may be made to the late Dr. Goulburn's "Readings on the Collects," and to the present author's "Notes for Meditation on the Collects for the Sundays and Holy-days of the Christian Year."

## THE EPISTLE AND GOSPEL.

THE reading of the Scriptures has naturally always formed a prominent feature in the public assemblies of Christians for worship. Justin Martyr in his Defence of the Christians (A.D. 140), when describing their Sunday worship, says: "On the day called Sunday all who live in cities or in the country gather together to one place, and the memoirs of the



apostles or the writings of the prophets are read, as long as time permits; then, when the reader has ceased, the president verbally instructs and exhorts to the imitation of these good things. Then we all together stand and pray; and, as we before said, when our prayer is ended, bread is brought and wine and water, and the president offers both prayers and thanksgivings, according to his ability, and the people assent, saying Amen; and there is a distribution to each and a reception of what has been blessed, and to those who are absent a portion is sent by the deacons; and they who are well-to-do, and willing, give what each thinks fit; and what is collected is deposited with the president, who succours the orphans and widows, and those who through sickness or any other cause are in want.”\*

The arrangement of fixed lessons from the letters of the apostles and from the Gospel record of our Lord's life and words is very ancient; our present selection of Epistles and Gospels may be traced as far back, with variations of course, as the end of the fifth century, if not to a still earlier date. The Epistle and Gospel give the Church's special Scripture teaching for each Sunday and Holy-day, which may profitably be studied devotionally in preparation for Holy Communion. Some central thought, linking together, or common

\* Apology, I. 67.

to, both the Epistle and the Gospel, is often to be found in the collect, which thus suggests guidance for our meditation. As we draw near to our Lord in the Sacrament of His Body and Blood, we may well meditate on the example of His earthly life brought before us in the special Gospel for the day—His humility, obedience, prayerfulness, loving sympathy, or self-sacrifice; or upon the way in which He dealt with those who came before Him in their needs and sorrows during His earthly ministry, as a pledge of His readiness to receive and help all who now draw near to Him in faith and prayer, begging His mercy for themselves or others. He is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever—the Son of Man and the Son of God. “What Jesus was, God is; what Jesus was, man should be.”

At the announcement of the Gospel all stand in honour of our Lord, whose words are rehearsed, or some act or event of His earthly life narrated. We stand, as it were, to welcome Him, and as ready to obey His word. The special honour in which the Gospel is held is marked likewise by the doxology repeated at its announcement, “Glory be to thee, O Lord.”

## THE CREED.

THE recital of the Creed may be regarded as a sort of response on the part of the congregation to the teaching which has just been given in the scriptural lessons. "He that cometh to God must believe that He is [in His existence], and [concerning His character] that He is a rewarder of them that seek after Him." (Heb. xi. 6.) Accordingly the common profession of our faith in God, as He is made known to us by our Lord Jesus Christ, is specially appropriate as we draw near in the strength of our baptismal adoption to show forth our Lord's victorious death, and to seek the nourishment of our regenerate life. The summary given in the Catechism of what we "chiefly learn" in the articles of the Creed, is specially to be remembered as emphasizing the difference between our belief *of* or *as to* certain facts and our belief *in* the personal God. To believe *in* a person means not merely that we believe that he exists, but it implies the surrender of ourselves in trust and confidence to the one in whom we believe. So a man believes in his wife, a wife in her husband, or a child in its parents. This surrender of ourselves in perfect trust and obedience to God, made known to us in His threefold being as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and standing to us in a threefold relation as our Creator, Re-

dëemer, and Sanctifier, is what should be implied in our recitation of the Christian Creed. Our thoughts are thus lifted from self to God, and to the spiritual realization of His glory, to whose special presence we are drawing near.

All the twelve articles of the Creed, which are distinguished one from another as printed in our American Prayer Book by a colon between each and the next, are summed up in our belief in the Father our Creator, the incarnate Son our Redeemer, and the Holy Ghost our Sanctifier. The facts and truths in which we profess our belief, under each of the three heads of the Creed, tell of something concerning each person of the Triune God; they are all to be regarded in this light. We thankfully enumerate the different mysteries in the incarnate life of the Son of God, whereby our redemption was wrought out; we rejoice in the mention of the means whereby the Holy Spirit carries on His work of sanctification; gathering us into the holy Church, wherein He dwells, binding us together in the communion or fellowship of His people, bestowing upon us the forgiveness of sins through our new birth of water and the Spirit in baptism, and thus preparing us for a joyful resurrection of the body and for the life of the world to come. The Creed should be repeated, not as a dry statement of dogmas but with

a note of exultation, as a hymn of praise to God, to whom we can offer no higher praise than to declare His nature and His works, what He is as He has made Himself known to us, and what He has done on our behalf.

In this connection it should be noted that the Creed, whether in its shorter or its longer form, is simply a statement of *facts*; it contains no doctrines, in the narrower sense of *theories* and explanations of the facts. *How* God, while absolutely one in His being, exists in a threefold manner; *how* the divine and human natures are united in the one person of our Lord Jesus Christ; the explanation of the atonement; the exact nature of the resurrection body—these are all interesting studies for the theologian, but such questions are not touched in the profession of faith required of candidates for baptism or of those approaching the sacrament of the altar. The most dogmatic expressions of the Nicene Creed only state, without attempting to explain, facts concerning the true Godhead of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and were intended to guard the truth of the facts against the denials of philosophers, who would not believe aught that passed their own power of comprehension.

In Eastern Christendom the Creed is said in the plural, "We believe." Our Western form in the first person singular, which probably reproduces the earliest baptismal profession

of faith, has its special significance. While the Creed is the confession of the whole Catholic Church, the blessed company of all faithful people, the body of Christ taught by the Spirit of truth, yet its truths must be appropriated by each one of us as living members of the body. Individually we are to live by faith in "the Father who made me and all the world, the Son who redeemed me and all mankind, and the Holy Ghost who sanctifieth me and all the people of God." "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches." (Rev. ii. 7.)

For a devotional exposition of the Creed, showing how we are, in St. Jude's words, to build up ourselves, our moral and spiritual life, on the foundation of our most holy faith, reference may be made to the author's "Meditations on the Creed," while a simple but exceedingly helpful explanation of some of the articles which present most difficulty is given in Gore's "Creed of the Christian."

### THE SERMON.

It will be noticed that this is the only place in the regular services of the Church where a sermon is prescribed. The Holy Communion being the chief and central act of worship, it was supposed that all would be present when it was celebrated; accordingly the sermon was then to be delivered, as notices (according to



the preceding rubric) were then to be given, and offerings then made. The position of the sermon in the course of the service should further be noted. It follows the reading of the Epistle and Gospel and the recitation of the Creed, and naturally will commonly be based on one or other of these, expounding some truth of our religion, and showing the motives which it affords for holy living. Preceding the greater part of the prayers, rather than coming at the end of a service, the sermon is intended to help the people to join intelligently and devoutly in all that follows. The approach to God in prayer and sacraments, like the hearing of His word, is of course to lead to a life in conformity with His will, that we may go forth from our worship enlightened, strengthened, and inspired to do His will in all the appointed circumstances of our daily life.

### THE OFFERTORY.

ALONG with our prayers our alms, in the widest sense, should go up before God. (Acts x. 4, 31.) In our great central act of worship we offer Him in the elements of bread and wine and in our money representatives of the gifts which He has bestowed upon us, as an acknowledgment that all things come of Him, and in order that they may be used for the accomplishment of His purposes. Of these natural gifts the bread and wine thus offered in

acknowledgment of God's sovereignty are blessed by Him for higher purposes, and returned to us as the means whereby we receive the spiritual food of our Lord's Body and Blood for the strengthening and refreshing of our souls. This may serve to remind us of a law of God's dealing, which was illustrated in Christ's feeding of the multitude. He required that the disciples should bring to Him what they had (St. Matt. xiv. 16-19), however inadequate for the need, and then He blessed and used this offering in a way which far exceeded their expectation.

The bread and wine represent the sustenance of our life, and correspond with the gifts which God bestows on us for our use; our alms represent that portion of our time and money which we specially dedicate to the service of His kingdom. Thus the two together represent the entire consecration of all that we have to be offered to God in the name of His dear Son. In this connection we should note that in the elements of bread and wine we offer not merely fruits of the earth, but these cultivated and prepared by man's labour and care. So in the Levitical sacrifices "it was required that man's life and labour should have entered into that which was offered to God." \*

\* Westcott on The Epistle to the Hebrews, p. 289, and Visitation Addresses on the Holy Communion by J. Wordsworth, pp. 29, 30.



## THE INTERCESSIONS.

ST. PAUL's bidding that in the assembly of the faithful prayers, supplications, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, gives the key to the prayer for the whole state of Christ's Church militant. (I. Tim. ii. 1, 2.) The Holy Communion binds us all in fellowship one with another in our common Lord. So, when we have offered our gifts, we make our prayers for all: (1) For the peace and unity of the whole body of Christians; (2) according to the Apostle's injunction, first among special classes for kings and all that are in authority, remembering their own needs and the influence which they must exert on those over whom they rule; (3) for the clergy, with a like twofold remembrance of their personal needs and of their ministerial responsibilities; (4) for the laity of all classes and ranks, and specially for the congregation joining in the present service; (5) for the sick and suffering, that their sorrows may according to God's wisdom be relieved or blessed; (6) to these prayers for different classes of persons in the Church militant and struggling on earth we add our thanksgivings for all who have been carried safely through the temptations and trials of earth, and who, having departed this life in God's faith and fear, await

the perfection of their bliss at the manifestation of His heavenly kingdom.

Under these different heads we shall naturally have special cases to remember before God. The general prayer will have its application in our minds to various particular persons.

Corruptions and exaggerations concerning the condition of the departed led by way of reaction (natural, but not less deeply to be regretted) to the omission from the reformed liturgy of explicit prayers for the faithful departed. Such petitions, for their present rest and peace and for the hastening of their final joy, were universal in early liturgies. The following from the liturgy attributed to St. James may be quoted as a specimen:

“Remember, O Lord, thou God of spirits and of all flesh, the right believers whom we have remembered and whom we have not remembered, from righteous Abel unto this day; make thou them to rest yonder in the land of the living, in thy kingdom, in the enjoyments of paradise, in the bosoms of our holy fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, from whence pain, sorrow, and sighing are fled away, where the light of thy countenance visiteth them, and shineth perpetually.”\*

\* Purgatory, the State of the Faithful Departed, Invocation of Saints, by A. J. Mason, p. 67.

## THE PREPARATION OF THE COMMUNICANTS.

THIS next section of the service, the Preparation of the Communicants, is likewise based upon apostolic teaching. (I Cor. xi. 23-34.) St. Paul's words about examining or proving one's self before eating of the Bread and drinking of the Cup should be carefully read, and in the Revised Version, where it will be seen that, stern as is the apostle's warning, his words have not that absolutely terrifying character which keeps so many persons from approaching the sacrament.

1. The word "judgment" should be substituted for "damnation," which in modern English use has come to be limited to final and eternal loss, whereas St. Paul is plainly speaking of temporal judgments which follow profane treatment of the holy sacrament (verse 30), judgments which, however severe in some cases, were intended to bring persons to a better mind, that so they might not be condemned at last (verse 32).

2. To eat and drink "unworthily," that is to treat the sacrament as a common thing, "not discerning the Lord's body," not recognizing the inner significance of the rite, is entirely different from eating and drinking while "unworthy" of so great a gift. We are all

taught in the prayer of humble access (immediately before the consecration) to acknowledge ourselves not worthy. The greater the spiritual earnestness, the more careful the preparation of the intending communicant, the more keenly will this be felt. But this sense of our unworthiness of God's loving condescension and favour will be a safeguard against treating His gifts "unworthily" through carelessness and indifference, or in profane contempt.

3. A distinction, often overlooked, should further be noted between the self-examination on which the apostle lays stress and the word as commonly understood in manuals of preparation for Holy Communion. What the apostle is specially concerned with is the present spiritual condition of the person, his attitude toward God. "Let a man examine or prove himself," and see where he stands, whether he be in the faith (II Cor. xiii. 5), true to his baptismal dedication and regeneration. What he has done or left undone is important as tending to make him what he is; if he has fallen into sins, they must be repented of and shaken off. But it is to be feared that too often a person's attention is fastened on past acts rather than on what is the really important consideration, his present condition, and the positive qualities which every Christian as such is called to show. (See Gal. v. 22-25.)

4. One other distinction may be remembered. We do not come to the Holy Communion to receive the forgiveness of our sins. That is to be gained beforehand, on our repentance in all its parts (as set forth in the Warning when notice is given of Holy Communion)—sorrow for sin, confession of sin, firm purpose of amendment, the making of such reparation as is possible for wrong-doing. This repentance, if necessary, is to be manifested and perfected in a confession of our sins before a priest, as the representative alike of God and of the Church, from whom an individual absolution may be received, setting a seal to our reconciliation, and restoring us to our baptismal position. But in any case we are to come to Holy Communion reconciled. The sacred food at our Father's board, while the pledge of our being in His favour, is for the nourishment of our regenerate life. In the strength of that regenerate life we must draw near to receive it. Hence the requirement in the Catechism of Faith, Repentance, and Charity on the part of those who come to the Lord's Supper. Faith is the positive exercise of the powers of our regenerate life, the realizing of the privileges to which we are admitted; Repentance is the negative side of the same, throwing off the sins which have come in to clog and hinder the life of Christ within us; Charity recognizes our fellowship one with an-

other in the family of God, as fellow-members of Christ's body. Thus we are to come to Holy Communion in the power of our regenerate life as members of Christ, drawing near to God in reliance on the presence and grace of the Holy Spirit, whose working in us is shown in the gifts of Faith and Repentance and Charity.

Our *sins* then are to be forgiven before coming to Holy Communion. Our remaining *sinfulness* is to be more and more remedied by fresh union with our Lord's perfected humanity, our sinful bodies being made clean by His body, and our souls washed in His most precious blood. Accordingly in the service itself a Confession and Absolution are provided as a part of the preparation before reception.

In the longer Exhortation ("Dearly beloved in the Lord") should be noticed the noble statement of the great truths of the Trinity, the Incarnation, and the Redemption; in the shorter Exhortation ("Ye who do truly and earnestly repent") the qualifications required in those who would communicate—repentance for past sin, charity toward all, a right intention for the future; in the Confession the threefold division of sins, by thought and word and deed.

A general Absolution is to be regarded, like a benediction, as an authoritative invoking of God's mercy and pardon by one appointed to



plead with Him. This gift will surely be bestowed on everyone fittingly disposed to receive it. "And if the son of peace be there, your peace shall rest upon" the house. (St. Luke x. 6.) A general absolution cannot have the judicial character that belongs to an absolution pronounced after a particular confession of sins by one who submits his case to the judgment of the Church as represented by the priest. The full exercise of the power to remit sins in Christ's name must be accompanied by the opportunity to retain sins. (St. John xx. 23.)

On the other hand, with reference to a public confession, it should be remembered that sin has two sides, (1) against Almighty God, His grace and love, and (2) against the fellowship of the Church, whose power it weakens, and whose life it hinders. Accordingly the solemn confession is made not only in the presence of God, but also before the congregation representing our brethren in Christ; and the absolution has not only a reference to the needs of our own individual souls, but also to the restoring in us of the spiritual influence and energy which we are to use for the benefit of the whole body of Christ.

On the whole question of Absolution reference may be made to Joseph Bingham's two Sermons and two Letters concerning the Nature and Necessity of the several sorts of Absolution. Bingham's Works, vol. x.

## THE COMFORTABLE WORDS.

AFTER the Absolution are repeated the Comfortable Words, "some of the most precious declarations of Holy Scripture to confirm the hope and gratitude of the pardoned worshippers."\* These were taken from Archbishop Hermann's "Consultation,"† where, however, they preceded the Absolution as scriptural statements upon which it rested.

1. First is repeated our Lord's gracious invitation to all who are weary and heavy laden to come to Him for rest and peace. (St. Matt. xi. 28.) Our Lord's words of promise are no less true now than when He was on the earth; on the contrary, they have both a wider reach and a deeper meaning now that He is enthroned on high and dispenses the fulness of the Father's gifts to all His people.

2. Then is rehearsed the declaration of the Father's love (St. John iii. 16), which prompted Him to give His Son "not only to die for us, but also to be our spiritual food and sustenance in this holy sacrament." The "eternal life" we find in Christ is not merely a fut-

\* Frere, p. 504.

† Hermann was a reforming archbishop of Cologne. His book, *A Simple and Religious Consultation*, dealing both with doctrine and with forms of worship, was published in 1543, and an English translation in 1547. See Frere, pp. 28, 29.



ure gift, though it will have its full realization in the world to come; it is that "life which is life indeed" (I Tim. vi. 19), which comes from the knowledge and love of the true God and of His Son. (St. John xvii. 3; I St. John v. 11-13.)

The belief in Christ which is the condition of this gift does not consist in any merely intellectual act; it involves the surrender of ourselves to Him in humble trust and loving obedience.

3. The "faithful saying" which St. Paul quotes (I Tim. i. 15) may have been a fragment of a hymn on Redemption commonly repeated among Christians in early days.\* Remembering the ignorance and alienation from which he had himself been rescued, the apostle adds, "of whom I am chief."

4. St. John's words, "If any man sin," etc., are no encouragement to think lightly of sin. In the whole passage (I St. John i. 5-ii. 6) the beloved disciple is urging the inconsistency of sin (moral darkness) with any claim to have fellowship with God, who is perfect light. On our repentance God not only forgives but cleanses us. In our regenerate condition sin should be more and more done away. Yet

\* For other Christian hymns imbedded in the New Testament Scriptures see *Lauda Sion* (New York Church Club Lectures, 1896); Lect. II., *The Hymns of the Eucharist*, pp. 51-53.

so long as we are in the world it will not be wholly removed, but we shall from time to time fall into sins of infirmity. The presence of a petition for forgiveness in the Lord's Prayer (the prayer of God's reconciled children) teaches us the continual need of repentance for the Christian, even though grievous and deliberate sins have been forsaken. The incidental commission of lesser sins will be pardoned to the Christian for Christ's sake, to whom we are united. Thus, while many sins are left behind, we shall always need to seek the promised cleansing from all sin. In proportion as this is realized, our eyes are opened by God's Spirit to further duties and calls for service, and to new ideals of life, the failure to realize which, when recognized, opens out new possibilities of sin, and therefore affords new occasion for repentance and confession.

In Bishop Seabury's Communion Office a "private ejaculation" is given after each of the Comfortable Words:

1. Refresh, O Lord, thy servant wearied with the burden of sin.

2. Lord, I believe in thy Son Jesus Christ, and let this faith purify me from all iniquity.

3. I embrace with all thankfulness that salvation that Jesus has brought into the world.

4. Intercede for me, O blessed Jesu! that

my sins may be pardoned through the merits of thy death.\*

## THE SURSUM CORDA.

THE bidding, "Lift up your hearts," with the response of the people, "We lift them up unto the Lord," followed by the hymn of praise, are among the most ancient parts of the service for Holy Communion. They are found in all the early liturgies that have come down to us. St. Cyril of Jerusalem in his explanation of the service, given in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, in A.D. 347, to those who had been recently initiated into the Christian Church, says:

"After this the priest cries aloud, 'Lift up your hearts.' For truly ought we in that most awful hour to have our heart on high with God, and not below, thinking of earth and earthly things. The priest then in effect bids all in that hour abandon all worldly thoughts, or household cares, and to have their heart in heaven with the merciful God. Then ye answer, 'We lift them up unto the Lord': assenting to him by your avowal. But let no one come here who with his lips can say, 'We lift up our hearts to the Lord,' but in mind employs his thoughts on worldly business. God indeed

\* A Half Century of the Legislation of the American Church, vol. iii., p. 445.

should be in our memory at all times, but if this is impossible by reason of human infirmity, at least in that hour this should be our earnest endeavour.

“Then the priest says, ‘Let us give thanks to the Lord.’ For in good sooth are we bound to give thanks, that He has called us, unworthy as we are, to so great grace; that He has reconciled us who were His foes; that He hath vouchsafed to us the Spirit of adoption. Then ye say, ‘It is meet and right’: for in giving thanks we do a meet thing and a right; but He did, not a right thing, but what was more than right, when He did us good, and counted us meet for such great benefits.”\*

We are bidden not merely to collect our wandering thoughts and fix them on the things of God, but also to remember that, even while in the body and on this earth, we are made in Christ, as united with Him, to sit in heavenly places; admitted, that is, to fellowship with God, and with His saints and angels, and endowed with spiritual privileges such as will be fully realized in the world to come. (Eph. i. 3; ii. 6.) In this spirit we are called to praise God the thrice-holy, whose almighty Power is ever exercised according to infinite Wisdom and in perfect Love, for what He is in His own infinite being, and for all that He

\*The Catechetical Lectures of S. Cyril, lect. xxiii.

has done for us in our creation, redemption, and sanctification.

The older Eastern liturgies often gave here a long enumeration of God's works in creation and redemption, for which we praise His holy name. The proper Prefaces for certain chief festivals emphasize the great truths which those festivals commemorate—the Incarnation of the Son of God; the redeeming Passion and Resurrection of our Lord; His Ascension into heaven as our head and leader; the gift of the Holy Spirit; the Triune being of God.

The *Ter sanctus* is taken from the song of the seraphim (among the highest orders of angelic beings) in Isaiah vi., and from the song of the four living beings, in Revelation iv., who are represented in St. John's vision as leading the worship of all God's servants. To us, as to St. John, a door is opened in heaven, that we may share in this worship of the heavenly host, gathered round the Lamb standing before the throne as it had been slain, bearing, that is, the marks of a sacrificial death.\* In the eucharist Christ does not descend again to earth or earthly conditions; rather He lifts us up to Himself in the spiritual world.

It was the vision of the divine glory that called forth from Isaiah the dedication of himself to God's service. (Isa. vi. 8.) So our joy in the worship of the thrice-holy is to be

\* Rev. v. 6.

made real by the consecration of ourselves to His service in the carrying out of His purposes and the extension of His kingdom.

The twofold function of the angels' service is to have its counterpart in ours. Worshiping with them before the throne of God, we are like them to go forth to active ministry in God's service. (Heb. i. 14.)

### THE PRAYER OF HUMBLE ACCESS.

THE prayer of humble access has already been touched upon under the head of the Preparation of the Communicants. We should notice the combining of the two ideas, (1) of the reality of the spiritual gift offered, and (2) of the necessity, for its profitable reception, of right dispositions and a spiritual appetite: "Grant us *so* to eat the flesh of thy dear Son . . . that our sinful bodies may be made clean by His body."

### THE PRAYER OF CONSECRATION.

IN the prayer of consecration (1) we rehearse the account of our Lord's institution of the holy sacrament as the ground and warrant for our celebration thereof. The priest repeats our Lord's acts and words. Subsequently (3) in *The Invocation* we pray that these may be made efficacious now by the power of

the Holy Spirit, so that what the bread which Christ brake and the cup which He blessed became to the apostles they may become to us. Meanwhile (2) in *The Oblation*, in the way that He appointed, with the gifts that He ordained, we make a solemn memorial before God of Christ's victorious sacrifice, His blessed passion and precious death, His mighty resurrection and glorious ascension, rendering unto God most hearty thanks for the innumerable benefits procured unto us by the same—the conquest of Satan by Christ's obedience unto death, the forgiveness of our sins, the opening of the kingdom of heaven to all who follow Him.

Thus do we, in the apostle's words, "show" or "proclaim our Lord's death" (I Cor. xi. 26), making our boast in His triumph; and then we claim our share in its benefits. In glad exultation we tell the great things which He has wrought; in solemn pleading we beg for ourselves and for all His whole Church—the living and the departed—"the forgiveness of our sins, and all other benefits of his passion." This is the meaning of the name Eucharist (Thanksgiving) applied to the sacrament of our Lord's Body and Blood. It is "our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving," as in the appointed way we make our memorial before God of the redeeming sacrifice of His dear Son. "As often as ye eat this bread and drink this



cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come."  
"Do this for a remembrance of me." (I Cor.  
xi. 24-26.)

And now, O Father, mindful of the love

That bought us, once for all, on Calvary's tree,  
And having with us Him that pleads above,

We here present, we here spread forth to Thee,  
That only offering perfect in Thine eyes,  
The one true, pure, immortal sacrifice.\*

It is of great importance that we should approach the eucharistic oblation from this side. It is not a sacrifice that we offer in order that we may be reconciled, as if we were outside the covenant of God; it is the memorial of our Lord's sacrifice whereby we have been redeemed; it is the thank-offering of those who are in covenant with God, and who rejoice in the privileges to which they have been admitted.

Accordingly the Communion is an integral part of the eucharistic rite. Neither part, the oblation nor the communion, stands alone, apart from the other. Like the Passover, which was its fullest type in the old Law, the eucharist is a sacrificial feast. The offerer is admitted to feast at the holy table upon that which has first been presented to God; so is he made partaker of the virtue of the sacrifice.

\* Eucharistic hymn, by William Bright. Hymnal, No. 228.



The benefit of the sacrifice is applied in the feast; the feast gains its meaning and significance from the oblation. "Christ, our paschal lamb, is sacrificed for us, therefore let us keep the feast." (I Cor. v. 7, 8.)

As the Passover (both in its original institution and in its annual commemoration) was the divinely appointed means for Israel to realize and claim the redemption from the hand of their oppressors which God wrought for His people; so the eucharist shows forth the victory over evil accomplished by our Lord in His passion, while by the continual pleading of this oblation of Himself once offered, and by feeding upon His Body and Blood, we are maintained in the new covenant which He has made, and are enabled for His service.

There is another aspect of the showing the Lord's death, which is emphasized in the Prayer of Consecration. We proclaim it in glad thanksgiving; we represent it in solemn pleading; we show it forth likewise as the law of Christian living. Accordingly we are taught along with the perfect oblation of Christ to "offer ourselves, our souls and bodies, a reasonable, holy, and living sacrifice" to God. The obedience of Christ our head was perfected through the things which He suffered. (Heb. ii. 10; v. 8.) His mystical body, with all its members, is to be perfected and accepted according to the same law of sacrifice and

obedience unto death. We too must die to the lower that we may rise to the higher life. The seed of the woman ever bruises the serpent's head at the expense of its own heel being bruised in the encounter. (Gen. iii. 15.) Feeding upon the broken bread and drinking of the outpoured cup we are gathered into fellowship with our Lord's passion, that, being united with Him in the likeness of His death, we may be also in the likeness of His resurrection. (Rom. vi. 5.) As we realize the power of Christ's passion in our own lives, in overcoming sin and strengthening us for God's service, so we are enabled with greater appreciation to rejoice in its victory and to plead its power for others.

Thus is the eucharist seen to be the great act of worship of the Christian Church, "our bounden duty and service." Along with Christ's perfect oblation of Himself we offer ourselves, all we have and all we are, to the Father to do His will. Our imperfect obedience, like our imperfect praise, is accepted through Jesus Christ our Lord, by whom and with whom, in the unity of the Holy Ghost, is all honour and glory to God the Father Almighty, world without end.

## THE RECEPTION.

Whene'er I seek the holy altar's rail,  
And kneel to take the grace there offered me,  
It is no time to task my reason frail,  
To try Christ's words, and search how they may  
be;  
Enough, I eat His Flesh and drink His Blood,  
More is not told—to ask it is not good.

I will not say with these, that bread and wine  
Have vanish'd at the consecration prayer;  
Far less with those deny that aught divine  
And of immortal seed is hidden there.  
Hence, disputants! The din, which ye admire,  
Keeps but ill measure with the Church's choir.\*

THE definition of the word Sacrament in the Catechism may well be kept in mind, together with its explanation of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. A sacrament is "an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace given unto us; [the outward sign] ordained by Christ himself, as a means whereby we receive the same [*i.e.*, the inward and spiritual grace], and a pledge to assure us thereof." The outward part or sign of the Lord's Supper—the bread and wine which the Lord hath commanded to be received—both symbolizes and by God's ordinance is the means of conveying to us the inward part or thing signified, the Body and Blood of Christ, for the strength-

\* John Henry Newman, in *Lyra Apostolica*, xxxiii.

ening and refreshing of our souls, as our bodies are strengthened and refreshed by the bread and wine. (I Cor. x. 16.)

Sacraments are divinely appointed meeting-places for the soul with God. As in every place where He records His name, so in every ordinance which He has instituted, He pledges Himself to meet with His people and bestow upon them the blessing attached to that ordinance. (Exod. xx. 24.) "Draw nigh to God, and He will draw nigh to you." (St. James iv. 8.) But our approach must be not only in bodily presence, or with outstretched hand; we ourselves, our spiritual being, must draw near in the power that His Spirit gives. We must lift up our hearts to God, laying bare the faculties of our inner being to receive His touch of blessing. So only can a spiritual gift be received. The hand of faith must lay hold of it and appropriate it. As during our Lord's earthly life many pressed against Him, but only those who had faith drew virtue from their contact with Him; even so is it with the sacraments of grace. Therefore is it said in the words which accompany the delivery of the sacrament, "The Body of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was given for thee, preserve thy body and soul unto everlasting life. Take and eat this in remembrance that Christ died for thee, and feed on him in thy heart by faith, with thanksgiving."

Communion in both kinds was distinctly ordained by Christ. "Take eat, this is my body," He said; and, as He gave the cup, "Drink ye all of it, for this is my blood of the covenant, which is shed for many." Reverence and obedience would make us shrink from any deviation from our Lord's institution. And we may be sure that some special grace belongs, according to His design, to the reception of each element of the sacrament, while in each we are linked with His sacred manhood.

Throughout Holy Scripture the blood is the symbol of life. (Gen. ix. 4; Levit. xvii. 11.) Blood shed signifies life laid down. (Psalm lxxii. 14; Heb. ix. 22; Rev. vi. 10.) Blood sprinkled or drunk signifies life imparted. (Levit. xiv. 14, xvi. 15-19; Heb. ix. 14, x. 24, xii. 24; I St. Peter i. 2; I St. John i. 7.) See the Note on "The idea of Christ's Blood in the New Testament" in Westcott's "Epistles of St. John," p. 34.

While others are receiving we have special opportunity for gathering up our devotions in acts of adoration and thanksgiving, in holy resolutions and intercessions.

## THE LORD'S PRAYER.

IN nearly all the early liturgies the Lord's Prayer is said at the conclusion of the canon or prayer of consecration, with which was joined the intercession for the living and the departed. The words given by our Lord summed up the prayer of His Church in celebrating the rite which He ordained for His perpetual remembrance. The position of the Lord's Prayer in our service has its special significance and beauty. Just as in the administration of baptism the first words said by or on behalf of the newly initiated member of Christ are the "Our Father"; so here immediately after our union with Him has been anew assured and strengthened by our feeding on His sacred Body and Blood, the first words of common prayer uttered by all the congregation are "Our Father." Afresh united with Christ, we address ourselves to His Father and our Father, to His God and our God; and along with Christ desire the hallowing of the Father's name, the manifestation of the Father's kingdom, the accomplishment of the Father's will. United afresh with our brethren by our common partaking of the sacred food, we pray to the one Father not for ourselves alone, but for the good of all. "We, who are many, are one bread (*or* loaf), one body; for we all partake of the one bread (*or* loaf)." (I Cor. x. 17.)

*Meum* and *tuum* (mine and thine) are not Christian words; *Paternoster* (Our Father) is the rule of Christian prayer, and therefore of Christian desire and life.

A eucharistic application of several of the clauses of the Prayer will be found in the author's "Meditations on the Lord's Prayer."

### THE THANKSGIVING AFTER COMMUNION.

WE are reminded in this prayer that the reception of sacraments is a means to a further end. We must use the grace which we have received. We must seek to abide in the fellowship—with God and with our brethren—into which we have been gathered. We must go forth from our worship to an obedient and self-sacrificing life of service, to do and bear and dare whatever God may call us to. "Already ye are clean," said our Lord to His disciples, "because of the word which I have spoken unto you. Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; so neither can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches. He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same beareth much fruit: for apart from me ye can do nothing." (St. John xv. 3-5.)



## THE GLORIA IN EXCELSIS.

AFTER the institution of the sacrament of His Body and Blood our Lord and His disciples, "when they had sung a hymn," went out unto the Mount of Olives. (St. Mark xiv. 26.) This hymn was probably the group of Psalms cxiii. to cxviii. called the great Hallel, which was ordinarily sung by the Jews in connection with the Passover. Having offered Himself in intention to the Father, His Body to be broken, His Blood to be shed, our Lord goes forth not reluctantly, but with a holy gladness, to Gethsemane, and Gabbatha, and Golgotha, where the sacrifice was to be consummated by the hands of others. So He would have us go forth to perform our vows with a song of praise in our hearts and on our lips. "When the burnt offering began, the song of the Lord began also with the trumpets." (II Chron. xxix. 27.) See a sermon on this text entitled "The Joy of Self-sacrifice," by Phillips Brooks, in "The Candle of the Lord and other Sermons."

Regarded thus, the position of the *Gloria in excelsis* at the end of our service has a special appropriateness. In earlier liturgies its place was commonly at the beginning of the service, even as the angels' song, on which the hymn is founded, heralded the birth of the incarnate Son. (St. Luke ii. 14.) At the end of the



service the words are to be regarded (1) as a thanksgiving, declaring the effect of our Lord's life and work, the benefits of which have been applied to us in the holy mysteries we have received. (2) Following the thanksgiving is a series of earnest petitions to our Lord, Himself the priest and victim of our sacrifice, to have mercy upon us, and to receive our prayer. (3) The hymn ends with a doxology addressed to our Lord, who has raised our human nature to the very throne of God, to be the instrument of the Father's working.

For the early use of the *Gloria in excelsis* as a morning hymn, and its later adoption into the eucharistic service, see "Lauda Sion," p. 69, etc.

## THE BLESSING.

OUR worship over, the holy mysteries performed according to the Lord's appointment, the priest is to let the people depart with the blessing, in which (1) he invokes upon them, in the apostle's words, the peace of God which passeth all understanding, to rule their minds through the knowledge, and their hearts through the love of God, as He is made known to us by Jesus Christ His Son. (St. John xvii. 3.)

(2) Then, as in the old law the priest was to put the Lord's Name upon the children of Is-

rael, and He would bless them (Num. vi. 22-27), so the full Name by which Christ has made God known to us, the Name into which we were baptized (St. Matt. xxviii. 19), is called upon us, and the blessing of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, our Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier, is implored to be amongst us and remain with us always, accompanying us from the sanctuary to our homes and business, amid our joys and sorrows.

So we depart in peace, in the name of the Lord.

“ Rejoice in the Lord alway; again I will say, rejoice. Let your forbearance be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand. In nothing be anxious; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall guard your hearts and your thoughts in Christ Jesus.” (Phil. iv. 4-7.)

## Morning and Evening Prayer.

### THE INTRODUCTORY PRAYERS.

THE sentences from Scripture with which the service opens are in three groups: (1) Those suitable for any occasion of Morning or Evening Prayer; (2) those specially appropriate for the different seasons of the Christian Year; (3) penitential sentences leading to the confession.

Thus to a certain extent they serve the purpose of the antiphons in the older services, sentences of Scripture, generally varying with the season or day, which were sung before and after the Psalms and Canticles.

The Confession and Absolution at the beginning of the service are intended to serve as a penitential introduction, that we may be the better prepared to sing God's praise, to hear His word, and to offer our petitions.

On the nature of a general confession and absolution, see the note on the service for Holy Communion, pp. 26, 27.

After the penitential introduction (when used) we begin the service proper with the Lord's Prayer. The "Our Father" gives both the form of prayer which our Lord pre-

scribed for our use, and the pattern in accordance with which we should frame our own petitions. Thus at the beginning of our service we are taught to rule out desires that would not be in accordance with God's will: (1) To subordinate material and temporal interests to those which are spiritual and eternal. Before we ask anything for ourselves, even that which seems most necessary, like "daily bread," we pray "hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done."

(2) To subordinate individual to common interests: "Our Father . . . give us . . . forgive us," etc. See also p. 42.

In the versicle and response, "O Lord, open thou our lips," etc. (Psalm li. 15), we beg God's help that we may rightly (with reverence, attention, and devotion) join in His worship.

The doxology, *Gloria Patri*, which is repeated also at the end of Psalms and Canticles, is an offering of worship to Almighty God as He is made known to us by Jesus Christ our Lord, existing eternally in a threefold mode of being, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and having a threefold relation to us in time, as our Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier.

"Praise ye the Lord" is a translation of the Hebrew word Hallelujah, with which many of the Psalms begin and end, *e.g.*, cxlvi.-cl.

## THE PSALTER.

THE Psalter is a divinely provided manual of devotion, the utterance of God's servants in ancient times, whose words have expressed the highest aspirations and deepest yearnings of His people under both the Jewish and Christian dispensations. Our Lord Jesus Christ not only must have joined in the recitation of the Psalms in the Synagogue and Temple worship, but He appropriated them to His own personal use, two at least of the seven Sayings upon the Cross being taken from the Psalter: Psalm xxii. 1, St. Matt. xxvii. 46, St. Mark xv. 34; Psalm xxxi. 5, St. Luke xxiii. 46; perhaps also Psalm lxix. 21, St. John xix. 28.

In union with Christ, the incarnate Son, as His members and endued with His Spirit, we should say the Psalms with a fuller and deeper meaning than was possible for God's servants in the Jewish Church. Of this we should be continually reminded by the repetition of the Christian doxology at their close. Imprecations of personal vengeance, which mark a lower stage of the revelation of God's mind than that which is vouchsafed to us, Christian people should understand as directed against *sins*, which defy God's wise and just rule, rather than against *sinner*s, who may be won to repentance.

In the monthly recitation of the Psalter, in the daily Morning and Evening Prayer, we are led through all the varied kinds of Psalms—those of moral instruction, of penitence and thanksgiving, of self-surrender and of colloquy with God, of contemplation of His works in nature and of His dealing with His people—to the Psalms of praise with which the book ends, and in which all the experiences of our spiritual life, reflected as it were in the Psalter, are intended to find their culmination.

The Psalms reflect all kinds of situations of trial to which God's servants are exposed. The recitation of the Psalter should help us to transcend the limits of our own narrow experience in realizing the varied experiences and trials of saints of God in circumstances very different from our own. Thus we should be brought into spiritual fellowship with the whole struggling body of God's servants under all sorts of conditions.

The Revised Version of the Bible (besides its greater accuracy of translation, which often clears difficulties) marks the different books, or collections, into which the Psalter is divided, probably as the Psalms were gathered together for use in the Jewish Church. It also prints the Psalms as Hebrew poetry, the distinctive characteristic of which was neither rhyme nor metre, but the parallel presentation in following lines of slightly varying aspects

of the same idea.\* The parallelism is roughly noted in the Prayer Book version of the Psalms (which is from the Great Bible of 1539) by the colon printed for chanting in the middle of each verse.

The Psalter represents the earliest English of the Prayer Book, being taken from the first authorized edition of the English Bible.

The anthem, *Venite, exultemus*, composed of Psalm xcv. 1-7 and Psalm xcvi. 9, 13, is used as an invitation to the praise of God in the daily service. From the time of St. Athanasius (A.D. 373) Psalm xcv. has been used in this way. The *Venite* sets before us the thought of the divine presence, with which we should enter on the day, taking up its tasks with joy and thankfulness as we first bow before the Lord our God.

## THE LESSONS.

OF exceeding value is the rule of the Prayer Book in the Table of Lessons, which takes us through the whole of Holy Scripture, putting us to school as it were with the several writers, that we may learn the lesson that each is intended to teach. This is an illustration of the way in which the Prayer Book guards the liberty of the people, while it puts a restriction

\* See also the two small volumes containing the Psalms in The Modern Reader's Bible.



upon the idiosyncrasies of the minister. Instead of the congregation being limited to the minister's favourite Scriptures, or doctrines, or topics of prayer, the Table of Lessons, the Creed, and the Christian Year, the prescribed order of prayer, with its broad reach of intercessions, secure for both minister and people more varied instruction, a truer proportion of the faith, and wider sympathies in prayer.

In the daily lessons practically the whole of the Old Testament is read in regular course once in each year, with selected portions of the Apocrypha; the New Testament (except the Revelation) is read twice, the book of the Revelation once during Advent; while on Sundays and Holy-days the proper lessons are taken from different parts of the older and later Scriptures.

In the lessons from the Old Testament and the New Testament we should observe both (1) the connection between the two, the unity of purpose and idea running throughout all; and (2) the growth and advance in the revelation of God's mind and will. We are not to look for the same clear revelation in the Levitical law as from the lips of our Lord, nor for the same standard of life in the patriarchs as in those who have been made members of Christ and temples of the Holy Spirit. God, who spake to the fathers by divers portions (in fragmentary fashion) and in divers manners



(in dreams and visions), hath spoken unto us in His incarnate Son. (Heb. i. 1, 2.) He leads on His people gently, teaching them as they are able to receive His word.

In reading the history of God's servants in the Old Testament we should lay to heart the one great point of faith or devotion which is emphasized, rather than dwell on faults which belong to their time and circumstances. In the narrative of the simple life of older times we have brought before us a greater simplicity of character, like that in children, in which one dominant motive stands out. So there are set before us in the stories of the Old Testament object lessons of great motives which we are to consider and set ourselves to imitate, even though in other respects the moral environment is far below that of the Christian.

The different parts of Holy Scripture should be read and heard with the remembrance (so far as is possible) of the stage of revelation to which each belongs; and with the recognition of the purpose and character of each: *e.g.*, in the Old Testament there are books of History, of Poetry, collections of wise sayings (like the Proverbs), and of Sermons, like the utterances of the Prophets. In the New Testament there are the Biographies (in the Gospels), a fragment of Church History (in the Acts of the Apostles), Letters written by different apostles to churches and to individuals

under their spiritual care, and the narrative of a Vision (in the Revelation of St. John).

## THE CANTICLES.

### I. *Te Deum*.

THE *Te Deum* has been called the "cantic of Ambrose and Augustine," from the legend that at the Baptism (in A.D. 386) of Augustine (afterward Bishop of Hippo) by Ambrose, Archbishop of Milan, the hymn was improvised and sung responsively by these two great teachers of the Church. The legend is groundless, but it approximately fixes the date of the hymn, which really belongs to the end of the fourth century, while portions of it are probably still more ancient.

The hymn as we have it consists of three parts, two of them belonging to its original form (though these may each have had an independent earlier existence), the third an appendix.

1. (vv. 1-13). In association with all His servants, whether angels or saints, living and departed, we worship the Triune God: "We praise thee, O God."

2. (vv. 14-21). We worship the incarnate Son, by whom the purpose of God for man's redemption is accomplished: "Thou art the King of Glory, O Christ."

These two parts of the hymn are parallel to the songs of worship in St. John's vision (Rev. iv. and v.) ; the first addressed to the Lord God Almighty (iv. 8), the second more especially to the Lamb, the glorified Redeemer (v. 12-14).

3. (vv. 22-29). Versicles mostly from the Psalms: "O Lord, save thy people."

vv. 22, 23, Psalm xxviii. 9.

vv. 24, 25, Psalm cxlv. 2.

v. 27, Psalm cxxiii. 3.

v. 28, Psalm xxxiii. 22.

These versicles represent the petitions for the day's protection which naturally flow from the consideration of the great truths commemorated in the earlier hymn. In this sense the verses were added to the early form of the *Gloria in excelsis*, when it was used as a morning hymn. They may well be incorporated in the private morning devotions of those who cannot attend the daily worship of the Church.

The last verse of the canticle proper (v. 21) should more correctly read, "Make them to be *rewarded* with thy saints." Later Latin copies had by an easy mistake changed *munerari* into *numerari*. But, as has been said, "the received version though not faithful to the original is happily comprehensive; for, to be 'numbered with the children of God,' and to have a 'lot among the saints,' is to receive the 'great

recompense of reward,' the heavenly heritage of those who are joint heirs with Christ of His triumphant kingdom."\*

In the enumeration of the different ranks of saints "the goodly fellowship of the Prophets" is not to be restricted to the prophets of the Old Testament, who prepared the way for our Lord. The goodly fellowship of the Prophets includes, along with these, all the great teachers whom God has raised up in the Christian Church, who with fuller gifts of the Holy Spirit carried on and perfected the work of the great teachers of the Old Testament. For the New Testament use of the word, see I Cor. xii. 28, xiv. 29-32; Eph. ii. 20, iii. 5, iv. 11. The Prophet's office under either covenant is not limited to *foretelling* future events; rather he *forthtells* God's mind and will, which has its present application as well as its future full realization. The Prophets are the men of vision, the Apostles are the men of action, the Martyrs are the sufferers, sealing with their blood the testimony of seers and rulers.

The title, "the Comforter," applied to the Holy Spirit means much more than consoler. In old English comfort meant strength and help. The Greek word (*Parakletos*) used to record our Lord's promise of the Comforter

\* J. H. Blunt, *Annotated Book of Common Prayer*.

(St. John xiv. 16, 26; xv. 26; xvi. 7) literally means "one who is called to our side," whether to guide us in perplexity, to help us in any difficulty, or to plead our cause. (The Latin word Advocate has the same meaning.) The Holy Spirit comes to be our indwelling "Helper" (R. V. margin), enlightening the mind, purifying the heart, quickening the conscience, strengthening the will, aiding us in our approach to God as well as in our resistance to evil. See p. 8.

In verse 17 the reference is without doubt to I Cor. xv. 55, 56. The "sharpness of death" might better be rendered "the sting of death." "What Christ overcame upon the cross was not merely, as the careless reader of this verse might infer, the anguish of dissolution, it was the power of sin. He thus cuts away, like the prince in the legend, the dense thicket that has blocked approach to the royal palace, slays the dragon, and opens the kingdom of heaven to all believers." \* Compare Heb. ii. 14, 15.

This spiritual lesson we may learn from the structure of the whole canticle: Beginning with worship of God for what He is in Himself and for what He has done on our behalf, and in that worship associating ourselves with all God's servants ("We praise thee"), we learn to trust ourselves individually to His

\* W. R. Huntington, in *Lauda Sion*, p. 186.

mercy: In thee, whom all worship, have I too trusted: let me never be ashamed, or disappointed of my hope. (Rom. x. 11.) So the *Te Deum* ends in what Bishop Jeremy Taylor calls "the confidence of a certain faith, the comfort of a reasonable, religious, and holy hope."

In contemplating daily work and trials we pass from the joyous realization of God's presence with us (recognized in the *Venite*) to the adoration of the Triune God revealed to us by Christ as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, with all the precious spiritual blessings which that revelation has brought to us.

## II. *Benedicite.*

THE *Benedicite*, or "Song of the Three Children," is a part of the Greek addition to the third chapter of Daniel contained in the Apocrypha. It is apparently based on Psalm cxlviii. Being sung in early Christian times among morning psalms, and in the monastic offices on Sunday morning, it was naturally chosen in the first English Prayer Book (1549) as an alternative for the *Te Deum* during the Lenten season, for which the more triumphant canticle was thought unsuited.

## III. *Benedictus.*

THE Song of Zacharias, sung after the second lesson at Morning Prayer. (See St. Luke

i. 8-25 and 57-80.) These are the words with which Zacharias, under the inspiration of the Spirit of God, broke the nine months' silence, which was the punishment of his disbelief in the angel's message promising the birth of his son. During this time Zacharias had opportunity to meditate on all that had been told him concerning the mission of the promised child, who should be the messenger to go before the face of the Lord and prepare His way. The fulfilment of God's promises to His people by the birth of the Messiah, and the redemption that He would accomplish; delivering the faithful from their spiritual foes, and setting them free to serve Him in holiness and righteousness: these are the thoughts of Zacharias's hymn, fitly repeated by us after the reading of the New Testament lesson, and an appropriate morning canticle (so it has long been used in the Christian Church), as it tells of the day-spring from on high shining upon those that before its rising upon them sat in spiritual darkness and the shadow of death.

The grand character of the Baptist, specially sent before our Lord to prepare His way, is set before us morning by morning to elevate our plans for the day's labour, reminding us of our vocation, each in his own sphere, and bidding us be true and brave in removing obstacles to our Lord's more complete rule and sovereignty.



IV. *Magnificat*.

THE Song of the Blessed Virgin Mary, sung after the first lesson at Evening Prayer. See St. Luke i. 46-55.

The *Magnificat* is the Virgin Mother's hymn of thanksgiving for the great mystery of the Incarnation, of which she was the chosen and highly favoured instrument. When Elizabeth salutes her with honour, as the mother of her Lord, Mary turns all the glory to God, who has regarded the low estate of His hand-maiden.

The Christian Church continually repeats Mary's hymn, in praise of the Incarnation, and of all the gifts of grace by which its virtue and benefits are continually applied. Christ, who was once born for us according to the flesh of blessed Mary by the power of the Spirit of God, is continually to be born in us by the operation of the same Spirit, reproducing in us His likeness. (Compare the collect for Christmas-day.)

Mary's hymn is fitly sung between the reading of the Old Testament and the New Testament lessons, both as a thanksgiving for the fulfilment of all God's promises of a redeemer, beginning with that of the seed of the woman, who at the expense of his own heel being bruised in the encounter should bruise the serpent's head (Gen. iii. 15); and as based on



Hannah's thanksgiving for the birth of her son, which it enlarges and makes more spiritual. (I Sam. ii. 1-10.)

Its use at evensong may remind us of the fulness of time in which God's purpose was fulfilled, and of "the last days," *i.e.*, the final dispensation in this world, in which we Christians live.

The hymn expresses, too, the meek and thankful spirit with which we should close a day's experience, praising God for the spiritual protection with which He has encompassed us against manifold temptations.

*v. Nunc dimittis.*

THE Song of Simeon, sung after the second lesson at Evening Prayer. See St. Luke ii. 29-32.

The hymn is the utterance of Simeon, the aged servant of God, trained and schooled as a Jew in the earlier dispensation, waiting for the fulfilment of God's promises to His people, and knowing from prophecies that the time for the coming of the Messiah was fulfilled. He had received a promise from God that he should not die until he had seen the Messiah. Led by the Spirit, Simeon enters the temple at the time when Mary brought her Child, forty days after his birth, to present Him to the Lord in accordance with the precepts of the law. (Num. iii. 11-13; Levit. xii. 6-8.) Recogniz-

ing in the little Child the long expected Messiah, and taking Him in his arms, Simeon utters this hymn of thanksgiving: "Now, O Lord, in peace Thou lettest Thy servant depart."

Its use from early times in the Christian Church as an evening canticle, and in our service after the reading of the New Testament scripture, is in accordance with its historical origin. We should lay hold of the great truths of the Christian revelation, and make our own its promises and gifts of grace. Like Simeon we too would embrace the Lord Christ with a lively faith, and with a faithful love; we would be embraced by Him in His sacraments of grace. Then in the peace that comes from the knowledge and the love of God, a peace which the world can neither give nor take away, we can trust ourselves to God in life and in death, rejoicing in the salvation which He has made known, a light which sheds its radiance over all nations, while it is the peculiar glory of His covenant people, the true Israel.

At the close of the day of work and service we fall back on the rest which comes from our hold on the great truths of the Christian revelation.

The Psalms which are provided as allowable alternatives for the Gospel Canticles, *Jubilate* (Ps. c.), *Cantate* (Ps. xcvi.), *Bonum est* (Ps.

xcii.), *Deus misereatur* (Ps. lxxvii.), and *Benedic, anima mea* (Ps. ciii.), are better used as they occur in the ordinary course of the Psalter.

## THE CREED.

IN Morning and Evening Prayer, as at the Holy Communion, the Creed follows the instruction given in the Scripture lessons, and precedes the prayers. In the strength of the revelation of God's being and work, made known to us in Scripture, and summed up in the Creed, we are emboldened to present our petitions.

"Having then a great high priest, who hath passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we have not a high priest that cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but one that hath been in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore draw near with boldness unto the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy, and may find grace to help us in time of need." (Heb. iv. 14-16.)

What is called the Apostles' Creed represents in its main structure and contents the baptismal creed of all local churches, whether East or West, in early Christian times. The particular form is that of the local church at Rome, the use of which from the commanding

position of the imperial city naturally became more widely known in Western Christendom than that of other more remote churches. We can trace it from the middle of the second century. The Creed was gradually expanded till it reached its present form in the seventh or eighth century, largely through the assimilation of articles of the baptismal confessions of other parts of Christendom.

We should understand the title, the Apostles' Creed, as meaning not that the formula was composed by the apostles, but that it embodies their teaching as they went forth to make disciples of all the nations, the Holy Spirit bringing to their remembrance all that our Lord had taught them. (St. Matt. xxviii. 18-20; St. John xiv. 26; see I Cor. xv. 3, 4; I Tim. iii. 16.)

The Nicene Creed is so called because (save some later additions) it was set forth at the council of Nicea (A.D. 325), to guard the truth of our Lord's Godhead, which was impugned by Arius. Its keynote is the declaration that the Son of God who became man is in His pre-existing being of one substance or nature with the Father. Later the third part of the Creed was developed, to guard the truth of the Godhead of the Holy Spirit.\*

\* If not by the council of Constantinople, A.D. 381, the words are found in the form of the Creed set forth by the council of Chalcedon, 451.

The clause asserting the procession of the Spirit from the Son as well as from the Father (*Filioque*) has been a cause of difference between Eastern and Western Christendom. While the words were inserted in the Creed without proper authority, they express a truth which we could not seem to deny by now omitting them; the assertion moreover can be explained so as to remove misunderstanding on the part of Eastern Christians, whose objection is to anything that might appear like an admission of two principles or sources of being in the Godhead. If the Spirit eternally derives His being from the Son as well as from the Father, the Father is eternally the source of being to the Son. That the Spirit proceeds from the Father through the Son is the great truth which both East and West confess, though in somewhat different forms.

For the use of the Creed as an act of adoration, summing up the whole service of praise, see p. 15.

## THE VERSICLES AND RESPONSES.

THE versicles and responses said in a fuller form at Evening Prayer, with only the first and last at Morning Prayer, are taken originally from the Psalms, while used almost in the same

form and in the same place in the Latin offices from which our Morning and Evening Prayer were translated and abbreviated.

Couplet 1, Psalm lxxxv. 7.

Couplet 2, Psalm xx. 9, R. V. margin.

Couplet 3, Psalm cxxxii. 9, 16.

Couplet 4, Psalm xxviii. 9.

Couplet 5, Psalm cxxii. 7 and Psalm iv. 8.

Couplet 6, Psalm li. 10, 11.

## THE COLLECTS.

THE collect for the day links the lesser daily offices with the central service of Holy Communion (see p. 10), thus reminding us that each day we are thankfully to call forth the power of the eucharistic gift in our daily life.

The fixed collects at Morning and Evening Prayer are all four of them of ancient origin.

The second collect, for Peace, at Morning Prayer is found in the sacramentary of Gelasius. (See p. 10.) The noble phrase, "in knowledge of whom standeth our eternal life, whose service is perfect freedom" (*quem noscere est vivere, cui servire est regnare*), is found in the meditations ascribed to St. Augustine, which are, however, in reality probably later than the collect.

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The corresponding collect for Peace at Evening Prayer is likewise in the Gelasian sacramentary.

The third collect, for Grace, at Morning Prayer is the collect in the older service-books for the early morning office (Prime).

The third collect at Evening Prayer, for Aid against Perils, held the same place in the late evening service (Compline).

“ There is a close resemblance between these ancient daily collects of Morning and Evening Prayer. In the first of each pair the subject of petition is the same, but the words are different, and suited to the respective seasons. We ask outward peace in the morning, to secure us against the troubles of the world; and inward peace in the evening, to comfort and quiet our minds when we are to take our rest. In the second of each pair of collects, we ask in the morning grace and guidance to direct us in our duty; and in the evening, light and aid, when we are passive or unconscious. The metaphor of light, according to Scriptural usage, will include the two ideas of knowledge and of comfort. We therefore pray that our understanding may be enlightened to perceive the sleepless providence of God, and our hearts cheered with the assurance of His love.”\*

\* Frere, p. 404.



The petitions of these collects are for the universal needs of all Christian people apart from particular circumstances; for grace and peace and protection. Hence, we are bidden to offer these petitions not for ourselves alone, but for the whole Christian body, as its members go forth to their daily toil each morning and return at eventide.

### THE INTERCESSIONS.

FOR the intercessions for civil rulers, for clergy and people, and, in the Prayer for all Conditions of Men, for the extension and unity of the Church, and for the sick and suffering, see the service for Holy Communion, p. 21.

### THE GENERAL THANKSGIVING.

THIS prayer was added to the Prayer Book of the Church of England at its last revision in 1662. With our prayers and supplications we are bidden by St. Paul to join our thanksgivings. (Philip. iv. 6.) The apostle's own example would teach us that a thankful acknowledgment of mercies already received should be the strength of our petitions for the supply of present and future needs. It is his custom to begin his epistles with a thanksgiving to God for what He has already done, and

in the strength of this acknowledgment to pray Him to continue and perfect the good work which He has begun. (See I Cor. i. 4-9; Eph. i. 3-17; Phil. i. 3-6.)

## THE PRAYER OF ST. CHRYSOSTOM.

THIS prayer is not found among the writings of St. Chrysostom (A.D. 407), but it occurs in later copies (probably of the ninth century) of the liturgy of the church of Constantinople which bears his name, at the beginning of the Communion service. It had no place in Western service-books, but was introduced into the English Prayer Book, at the end of the Litany, by Archbishop Cranmer in 1544.

The prayer, which is addressed to our Lord Jesus Christ, is based on His promise (St. Matt. xviii. 19, 20). The efficacy of united prayer consists not in the pressure brought to bear by a multitude of suppliants, but in the elimination of merely selfish desires as we associate ourselves with others, and others with ourselves, in our petitions, seeking the common welfare. The "two or three" represent the body of the faithful united with one another under the headship of the common Lord.

## THE GRACE.

IN the Apostle's benediction (II Cor. xiii. 14) there should be noted, in accordance with the old saying, *lex orandi, lex credendi* (the rule of prayer is the rule of faith), the testimony to the belief of the first Christians in the Godhead of our Lord, and in the equality and the distinction of the persons in the Trinity. While brought up as Jews in strict monotheism, this being the great truth which God impressed upon the world through His ancient people, the apostles nevertheless prayed to Christ for the same blessings which they sought from God, and paid to Him the same worship, showing that they recognized Him in His divine nature as of one being with the Father. (See I Cor. i. 3; II Cor. i. 2; Gal. i. 3; II St. John 3; Rev. i. 4-6.)

At the same time in asking a special blessing from the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, it is clear that a real distinction of persons (which is the term we use for want of better words) within the Godhead was recognized. The incarnate Son is mentioned first, probably because by reason of His having taken our nature He is naturally thought of as standing nearest to us; His grace (which includes both favour and help) introduces us to the love of God the Father ("No man cometh unto the Father but by me"); while the communion or

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fellowship of the Holy Ghost tells us that God is not to be thought of as an absent being in a distant heaven, or as manifesting Himself only nineteen centuries ago, but as coming now to dwell within us by His Spirit, making us partakers of the divine nature (II St. Pet. i. 4), communicating to us God's truth and love and purity, amid the duties and business and pleasures of our daily life, to which we go forth from our worship in the sanctuary.

## The Litany, or General Supplication.

A LITANY is a solemn form of entreaty, in which responses are a prominent feature. Such litanies were often sung in procession, particularly on occasions of penitence and special supplication. Our Litany is with very slight alterations the oldest part of the existing Prayer Book in English, having been put forth in 1544, translated and enlarged by Archbishop Cranmer from the earlier Latin forms. Several of Cranmer's additions seem to have been taken from Luther's Litany, as is the suffrage added in the American Prayer Book of 1892, "that it may please thee to send forth labourers into thy harvest."

After the opening Invocation of the several persons of the Triune Godhead, separately and collectively, all the petitions are addressed to our Lord Jesus Christ, still wearing our human nature glorified at God's right hand.

"There is one God, and one mediator between God and man, himself man, Christ Jesus." (I Tim. ii. 5.)

Stephen looked up to heaven and said, "I

see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God." (Acts vii. 56.)

Christ "in the days of his flesh, having offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and having been heard for his godly fear, though he was a Son, yet learned obedience by the things which he suffered; and having been made perfect, he became unto all them that obey him the author of eternal salvation."

"Wherefore also he is able to save to the uttermost them that draw near unto God through him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." (Heb. v. 7-9, vii. 25.)

The petitions fall into these three groups:

1. *Deprecations*, in which we beg for deliverance from various kinds of evil, internal and external, from temptations arising from the craft and malice of the devil, the pressure of the world, the weakness of our own fallen and disordered nature.

The petition "Remember not" is a translation of the anthem (founded on Tobit iii. 3 and Joel ii. 7) which was repeated with the seven Penitential Psalms,\* which stood in the old office books before the Litany. Both as indi-

\* Pss. vi., xxxii., xxxviii., li., cii., cxxx., cxliii.

viduals, and in collective form as a church or nation, we may well pray for mercy in respect of our own sins and those of our fathers. The temporal consequences of wrong-doing are not limited to the wrong-doer, or to his own time. Descendants may be poorer in all ways, material, physical, moral, intellectual, spiritual, owing to the folly or wickedness of those who have gone before them. We inherit disadvantages as well as advantages.

2. *Obsecrations*, in which we plead the different mysteries of our Lord's incarnate life;

(i) begging that what He has done and suffered for us may not be in vain;

(ii) imploring Him by the remembrance of His earthly experiences to help and deliver us in similar circumstances;

(iii) asking for the special virtue of each mystery, the hallowing of our nature by the Incarnation, our regeneration by His Nativity, the conquest of Satan by the Cross;

(iv) and asking for grace to follow His example in each, as His humility in the Incarnation, His poverty of spirit in the Nativity, His courage in the Passion.

3. *Supplications*, in which we pray for all sorts of blessings for ourselves and for all men in their various ranks and needs, rising up to the universal petition for all mankind.



We may well regret the omission of two suffrages from the older Litany:

“That thou wouldest repay everlasting good to our benefactors;”

“That thou wouldest give eternal rest to all the faithful departed.” (See p. 22.)

At the end of the Supplications there are passionate entreaties to our Lord as the Son of God, to hear us, and as the Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world, to have mercy upon us, and to grant us His peace. Then again we address ourselves to each person of the blessed Trinity. So at least we may understand the “Lord have mercy upon us, Christ have mercy upon us, Lord have mercy upon us.”

The “Our Father” is intended to gather up all our petitions in the words which Christ taught us.

The prayer, “O God, merciful Father,” was the Collect in the Mass in the Sarum book “for one in tribulation of heart.” The Epistle was II Cor. i. 3-5, the Gospel St. John xvi. 20-22.

The suffrages following this prayer (“O Lord arise help us,” etc., from the beginning and end of Psalm xlv.) are taken from a special intercession for use in time of war, but are fitting at any season to express the needs

of all Christians, called to a perpetual warfare in Christ's name against sin, the world, and the devil.

For the General Thanksgiving, the Prayer of St. Chrysostom, and the Grace, see Morning and Evening Prayer, pp. 68, 69, 70.

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